GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:145
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2002
FIRE IN FORESTS
SUDARSANA E.M. NATCHIAPPAN

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated forest area affected by annual fires in India;

(b) whether frequent fires occur in Uttaranchal;

(c) if so, the name of the areas affected by fires in Uttaranchal during the last two years and thereafter;

(d) whether the causes of forest fires, their impact and the policy issues relating to Prevention and Management of Forest Fires in our country have been well researched and documented by the department;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) It is estimated that more than 3 million hectares of forest area is affected annually by forest fires.

(b) & (c) Yes Sir. Forest fires occur frequently in the forest areas of the country during the fire season including Uttaranchal. The hilly areas of Uttaranchal particularly the coniferrous forests of chir pine are prone to repeated forest fires due to human interference. According to the Uttaranchal Forest Statistics 2001, published by the Uttaranchal Forest Department, it is estimated that during the last two years 13.76 sq.km forest area was affected by forest fire.

(d) to (f) Yes Sir. The forest fire studies are undertaken by the various research institutes and forest department research wings. Based on the experience gained through them, the Government of India has prepared a National Master Plan for prevention and control of forest fires, which incorporates the causes and impacts of forest fires and methods for their prevention and control. National Forest Fire Guidelines were also issued to all the States by the Government of India in June 2000 for prevention and control of forest fires. An 'Integrated Forest Protection Scheme' with a strong component on forest fire prevention and control will be implemented during the 10th five year plan.